



Health Committee – Introduced

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Suicide Prevention Training Position By Liu

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Position Statement:

SIYAC supports the proposed legislation requiring suicide prevention training for faculty every time they renew their license.

Position

It is the position of the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council, the voice of the young citizens of Iowa, that [bill number], requiring suicide prevention training for faculty be enacted. This legislation would allow school staff to recognize the signs of suicidal teenagers, augmenting the probability that signs of potential harm will be addressed early.

Rationale

This bill was prompted by an incident in the Johnston community, where two students took their lives due to possibly avoidable circumstances. These two students seemed like perfectly happy kids, but faculty were not educated on the warning signs of suicidal teenagers, so teachers were not able to detect these signs and help the students.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among young adults in Iowa. Oftentimes, young adults contemplating suicide have signs of irregular behavior. This legislation will prepare faculty and appropriate officials to recognize these potential signs of irregular behavior in students, augmenting the probability that signs of potential harm will be addressed early. Under this legislation, faculty would be required to undergo suicide prevention every time they renew their license or certification.

Not every suicide can be prevented, but with this bill, the lives of young adults will be saved.

Recommended Action

The suicide prevention training has been proposed before in the state of Iowa and was passed in the Senate last year. The cost of this training is approximately \$200,000 every fiscal year. As advocates for the well-being of our state's youth, SIYAC believes that this bill is necessary to help prevent suicide in young adults. We ask that the General Assembly consider supporting this bill during the 2014 legislative session.